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Pages 346-652

LA Report 7/1/68

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RRP003HBPS

INVESTIGATION

Bureau File Number

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DATE:

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See also Nos. 129, 198, 167, 396

219

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277B

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861.  2

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LA Report 7/1/68

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¹
~~LA~~ 56-156
JOS/sro

ADDITIONAL INTERVIEWS OF
INDIVIDUALS IN AREA OF SHOOTING

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 6/17/68

RONALD T. BENNETT, 2508 Highland Avenue, Manhattan Beach, California, telephone 545-2614, who is employed as a staff photographer for United Press International (UPI), 1543 West Olympic Boulevard, Suite 438, Los Angeles, California, telephone 387-7221, furnished the following information with respect to his observations and knowledge of the assassination of Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY on June 5, 1968:

He was given the assignment on June 4, 1968 to take photographs of Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY at the Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, California, and at approximately 10:00 p.m. that evening he went to the Ambassador Hotel. He parked his car in the rear parking lot of the hotel and entered the hotel by the north main entrance. He then proceeded to look at the ballroom and other areas in the hotel to determine the possible position of the Senator and camera angles he could photograph him from to his, BENNETT's, best advantage. He had a drink at the bar and then proceeded to the Fifth Floor, where the KENNEDY suite was located and met an associate UPI photographer named DAVE KENNERLY, who was also covering the KENNEDY rally. He advised that on the left side was Senator KENNEDY's private room while to the right was a larger room containing a bar and many people. He and KENNERLY then milled around and he, BENNETT, shot some photographs of KENNEDY in the larger room where the bar was located. He recalls also that GLENN FORD was in this room and he thinks he obtained several shots of FORD talking with Senator KENNEDY.

Senator KENNEDY then left the larger room and retired to his bedroom, so he, BENNETT, followed him to see where he could get a better photograph of KENNEDY alone. He observed Senator KENNEDY standing by a dresser mirror reading a newspaper, and catching glimpses of the television coverage of the primary election results. He then asked the Senator if he could shoot a picture in the mirror of him and the Senator replied, "No not in my bedroom for Pete's sake". At that time

On 6/13/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

by SA WILLIAM L. BOURQUE and - 347 -
SA DAVID H. COOK, DHC/mmc Date dictated 6/14/68

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one of the Senator's public relations men, named DICK TUCK, entered the room and berated BENNETT for attempting to photograph the Senator in his bedroom. TUCK then went into the hallway and made a joke of it to several of the other members of the press and photographers who were there.

He, BENNETT, waited in the hallway for approximately ten minutes for KENNEDY to leave his bedroom and go downstairs to the ballroom where the rally was taking place. KENNEDY did leave the bedroom and he proceeded toward the elevator. Since there was too large a crowd at that location for him to take any photographs, he and DAVE KENNERLY, who was with him at that time, ran down the stairs to try to get a photograph of Senator KENNEDY as he was disembarking from the elevator. He did not observe that the Senator disembarked from the elevator, but he noticed everyone who was downstairs, and also waiting for the Senator, leave the area and start toward the ballroom. He then recalls that someone said, "Here he comes.", referring to Senator KENNEDY and he observed the Senator approach the area of the ballroom.

BENNETT advised he was able to mount the platform directly behind ETHEL KENNEDY, while the rally was taking place. He took five or six photographs from that position with his wide angle 35mm Nikon, using Tri-X black and white negative film. He stated that one of these photographs was subsequently published as a UPI news photo.

Senator KENNEDY then made his speech and during this speech the pressures of the crowd kept shoving him into ETHEL KENNEDY and his camera jammed her in the back. She complained to several of the KENNEDY aides who were present and the next thing he knew, ROOSEVELT GRIER grabbed him from behind, placing one hand around his stomach, so as to prevent him from being pushed into Mrs. KENNEDY.

When Senator KENNEDY finished his speech, he proceeded to shake hands with several people in the crowd and signed some

autographs. He, BENNETT, thought that the Senator would leave the ballroom by going to his right, however, he left the area through some curtains, which were behind the podium. This led into the kitchen area and he, BENNETT, proceeded to follow as fast as he could. There were one or two individuals between himself and Senator KENNEDY as the group was making its way through the kitchen. Just as he, BENNETT, passed the metal doorway leading to the kitchen area, he heard what he later learned were five shots. At that time, he had the impression that firecrackers were going off. He does not recall the pattern of the shots that were fired, but they were very rapid. He does not recall seeing Senator KENNEDY fall to the ground, but as soon as he heard the shots being fired he, BENNETT, immediately dove to the floor. Directly to his right was a businessman, PAUL SCHRADE, who was struck in the head by one of the bullets. At that time he recalls seeing some greyish smoke in the air, but this was only an impression and he does not know specifically where the smoke came from. He then ducked behind a small doorway on the right side of the kitchen doorway, where he saw several people lying on the floor. He automatically started to shoot photographs of everything he saw.

He recalls he shot several photographs of Senator KENNEDY while the Senator was lying on the floor, and then he recalls he shot four or five photographs of SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN. During this time, he also observed someone limping through the crowd and heard this individual say something, but he does not recall specifically what it was. He does not recall seeing Mrs. KENNEDY, however, upon observing some of the photographs that he shot she was in these photographs. He does recall her telling the crowd to move back and to give "him", referring to Senator KENNEDY, some air.

He then jumped up on the kitchen counter and took some photographs of the suspect from that angle. At that time SIRHAN still had a gun in one of his hands and several people seemed to be on top of him, either punching him or hitting him. PIERRE SALINGER then jumped up onto the counter

and pushed him off of it. He recalls that SALINGER was crying at the time and was very upset with him for shooting photographs of Senator KENNEDY and SIRHAN. SALINGER also became angry with a woman photographer, whom he knows only as VIRGINIA. He recalls VIRGINIA had one of the KENNEDY aides, name unrecalled; tell him, BENNETT, not to shoot any more pictures.

As SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN was being removed from the kitchen area, he, BENNETT, shot some more photographs of him. At that time, one of the KENNEDY aides attempted to get the ambulance driver to throw him, BENNETT, out, evidently thinking that the ambulance driver was a policeman. He recalls seeing another photographer by the name of RICHARD DREW from the "Pasadena Star News" newspaper standing near him and they exchanged a few pleasantries the nature of which he does not recall.

At that time Senator KENNEDY was still on the floor and several people were about him. Several policemen were also on the scene and they started to block off the area, thereby isolating the Senator from the crowd. He, BENNETT, was able to barge through several policemen and retrieve his Los Angeles Police Department and Los Angeles Sheriff's Office press pass, which had been knocked to the floor approximately two to three feet from Senator KENNEDY's outstretched legs, when he, BENNETT, was pushed from the counter by PIERRE SALINGER.

The ambulance drivers then began to remove Senator KENNEDY from the kitchen area, however, he did not wait to see the Senator placed in the ambulance, but instead ran to a telephone and called his office, telling his supervisor, GLEN WAGNER, what had occurred.

He then ran out to the rear parking lot of the Ambassador Hotel to look for his car, but he could not find it for five or ten minutes. When he got his car started, the police had the area barricaded, so he parked his car, leaving

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some of his camera equipment in it, and then ran toward Eighth Street, which is the street directly to the south of the Ambassador Hotel, and after showing his press pass to a policeman was able to get through the barricaded area. He then stopped about three automobiles and asked the drivers for a ride, but no one would give him one, until three girls in a sportscar came along and consented to give him a ride to his office. A police car then pulled alongside them and he was able to ask them to give him a ride to his office. He climbed into the police car and they were about to proceed to his office, which is some distance from the Ambassador Hotel, when the policemen told him they could not leave the area. He then disembarked from the police car and found a pay telephone and was able to call his supervisor, GLEN WAGNER, and ask him to send someone to pick him up. At that time a taxicab came by, so he hung up the telephone and hailed the taxicab, and immediately proceeded to his office.

He recalls that he took a total of two and a half rolls of 35mm film, thirty six exposures of film to a roll, however, one of the rolls did not turn out due to an error in threading it while at the Ambassador Hotel. All the photographs were developed by HOWARD DECKER, who was then at the UPI office. BENNETT stated that all the photographs that appeared in the newspapers were UPI photographs taken by him and the negatives of these photographs were immediately forwarded to Mr. CLIFF MC DOWELL, Vice President, UPI Newspapers, 220 East 42nd Street, New York City.

BENNETT advised that the above information is true and correct to the best of his knowledge. He further advised that he does not recall seeing a young female caucasian in a polka dot dress at any time on June 4 or 5, 1968 at the Ambassador Hotel, principally in the kitchen area, just before or after Senator KENNEDY was shot.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 6/12/68

HANS PETER BIDSTRUP advised that he is an Electrician in the Maintenance Department of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, California, and resides at 1886 North Avenue, Los Angeles. He stated he was born on April 3, 1918, at Skorup, Denmark, and his wife is IRNA BIDSTRUP, who resides with him.

Mr. BIDSTRUP advised that he arrived on duty at the hotel at approximately 8:00 AM on Tuesday, June 4, 1968, and left the hotel at approximately midnight the same date. He stated that he left the hotel before the shooting of Senator KENNEDY and had no first hand knowledge of the happenings involved in this incident.

Mr. BIDSTRUP was shown a photograph of SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN and asked if he had seen this individual prior to the shooting of Senator KENNEDY. Concerning his knowledge in this respect, he furnished the following signed statement:

"Los Angeles, Calif.
June 10, 1968

"I, Hans Peter Bidstrup, make the following voluntary free statement to John H. Borgman, who has identified himself to me as a Special Agent of the FBI.

"My name is Hans Peter Bidstrup. I was born on April 3, 1918 at Skorup, Denmark. I reside at 1886 North Avenue, Los Angeles, Calif. I am employed as an electrician in the Maintenance Dept. of the Ambassador Hotel.

"On the night of June 4, 1968 I was the standby electrician in the sound booth at the Rafferty Party in the Venetian Room at the Ambassador Hotel. At about one hour before I went off duty, which would be about 11 p.m. a man wandered into the booth.

On 6/10/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
by SA JOHN H. BORGMAN/asi Date dictated 6/11/68
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"He sat down on a spool of wire. He had a drink in his hand. I am not a drinking man, so I don't know what kind of a drink he had but it was clear with a milky white cast and had in it what appeared to be a piece of lime and a small red object which looked like a piece of red candy to me. It was round on one side and flat on the bottom.

"As best I can recall this man began the conversation by saying 'I'm a Democrat'. He asked me if I was a Democrat and I replied that I was. He then asked me what I was doing, or what my job was. I told him I was an electrician and possibly I went into a little detail as to what my duties were.

"Also, after I had told this man I was a Democrat he held out his hand and shook hands with me. He then inquired something to the effect as to whether Senator Kennedy was going to be at the hotel that night. I told him I thought he was. The man appeared to be drinking, he did not appear intoxicated, but drinking just enough to be talkative. For this reason I did not pay too much attention to the sequence of the conversation & cannot remember the exact words, for the most part, used by this individual.

"This man asked in what room or on what floor Kennedy was staying, when Kennedy was coming in or if Kennedy was then in the hotel. I don't remember that I knew at the time so I couldn't tell him. The man made some inquiry concerning Kennedy's security. I think it had to do with whether or not Kennedy had bodyguards. Although I'm not sure it was as direct as this but this is the impression I have recalling it now.

"While we were talking, a Los Angeles fireman in uniform came into the booth. The man stopped his conversation and seemed to take

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"particular attention of the fireman. He asked the fireman what he was doing or what his capacity was. The fireman explained to the man that he was a fireman and was there for crowd control and fire security. The man appeared to take less interest in the fireman after this.

"The fireman left shortly thereafter. The man also asked when Kennedy was going to come to the hotel. I didn't know.

"The fireman left and returned a short time later, staying a few minutes & left again. It was about this time that the man left. About the same time as the fireman left. However, I don't recall if the two left together, or if the man left before or after the fireman.

"The sound booth was in an isolated section of the Venetian Room. The man came alone and did not meet anyone outside the booth and to the best of my knowledge was alone.

"The man who talked to me in the sound booth looks very much like the photo of Sirhan Sirhan shown to me by SA Borgman.

"I had, prior to the time that I talked to SA Borgman, seen pictures of Sirhan in the newspaper but the description of Sirhan in the newspaper stated Sirhan had an accent & the man I talked to had no accent. So, altho I was struck by the similarity between the newspaper photos of Sirhan and the man I talked to, because of the accent ascribed to Sirhan by the newspaper, I did not mention the incident to the authorities.

"The man I talked to in the sound booth in the Venetian Room I would describe as follows:

"male
Caucasian

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"about 22 years
5'6" to 5'7"
130 to 140 lbs.
slender build
no glasses
no moustache
dark curly hair; full head of hair
medium dark complexion
wearing no hat; faded dark blue sweatshirt
with a full zipper down the front and long
sleeves; shirt of unknown color under the
sweatshirt; blue denim trousers.
No noticeable accent.

"I have read the above 8 page statement and it
is true to the best of my knowlege.

"/s/ Hans Bidstrup

"Witness: /s/ John H. Borgman, Spc. Agt. FBI, LA,
Calif_ 6/10/68

"Witness: /s/ Robert E. Sage, Special Agent, FBI,
L.A._ Calif. 6/10/68"

Mr. BIDSTRUP described the fireman who came into
the sound booth at the Venetian Room while the above described
individual was in the booth as follows:

Sex	Male
Race	White
Age	30 years
Height	6'
Weight	180 pounds
Build	Medium
Complexion	Fair
Hair	Possibly blond
Dress	Wearing uniform of Los Angeles Fire Department

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

6/14/68

Date _____

ELMER M. BOOMHOWER, employee of the Ace Guard Service, Granada Hills, California, was interviewed at his residence, 10150 Collett Avenue, Granada Hills. He advised that he was on guard duty at the Ambassador Hotel on the evening of June 4, 1968, starting at 6:00 p.m. Prior to taking up a position on the fifth floor in the vicinity of the KENNEDY suite (the Presidential suite of the Ambassador) WILLIAM F. GARDNER, Security Officer of the Ambassador, had displayed to him an orange colored pamphlet with black lettering which bore the caption, "Kill KENNEDY." GARDNER then instructed him not to permit the passing of such pamphlets in the area where he, BOOMHOWER, was working on the fifth floor that evening. BOOMHOWER said he could not recall any other specific details concerning the pamphlet except that it had some kind of insignia indicating the source of the pamphlet.

BOOMHOWER also stated that among the persons he had permitted to enter the KENNEDY suite earlier on the evening of June 4, 1968, were the following CBS and newspaper men:

Mr. BRUNO
Mr. BARRY
Mr. TUCK
Mr. SMITH
Mr. DUTTON

He stated that possibly a Mr. DRAIN (phonetic) had also entered the suite. He said he was not aware whether any of these individuals were in the Embassy Room at the time that Mr. KENNEDY was shot in the early morning hours of June 5, 1968.

On 6/9/68 at Granada Hills, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

by SA CARL R. SCHLATTER:jmk - 356 - Date dictated 6/14/68

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

6/12/63

Date _____

_____, 131 South Hoover Street, Los Angeles, was interviewed at this location and furnished the following information:

She is sixteen years of age, having been born March 29, 1952, at Santa Monica, California. At approximately 3:30 p.m. on the evening of June 4, 1963, she arrived at the Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, accompanied by her girl friend, _____; 1175 South Windsor Boulevard, Los Angeles, for the purpose of attending a celebration for Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY, candidate in the California Presidential primary.

As _____ was standing near a metal bar (serving alcoholic beverages) toward the rear of the southwest portion of the ballroom, she became aware of a male individual standing immediately behind her, less than one foot away. Although she did not look this individual directly in the face, she observed his face by looking in a mirror approximately four feet in front of her behind the bar. _____ noted that she and this individual were the only ones in the immediate area, and she thought it odd that he would stand so close to her. _____ believes that this man stood behind her for between four to five minutes. During the entire four or five minutes, she observed this man in the mirror. She felt a hard object brush against her right hip, approximately waist high, and feels that this object was either a belt buckle or something in the man's pocket. At this point, _____ stated, "Would you please move?" and the man replied only, "Yes," in a nervous voice and walked toward the east side of the ballroom, disappearing from _____'s sight.

_____ advised that she has mentioned the above individual to _____ and that _____ told her that she did not see the man. _____ further noted that the bartender at the nearby bar had gone to get some Coke for

On 6/10/63 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
by SA RICHARD J. RAYSA/eb - 357 - Date dictated 6/12/63

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the Coca Cola machine, otherwise she would have requested the bartender to ask the above male individual to move away from her.

██████████ recalled that this male individual was approximately the same height as herself, namely 5'5", and that his overall appearance was unkempt and out of place at the hotel. She could not recall the man's dress, other than that his clothing was light colored; that he was not wearing a sport or suit type coat, and that his shirt was open at the collar.

██████████ indicated that she had seen photographs of SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN displayed by the news media and she believes the individual she observed at the hotel very closely resembles these photographs of SIRHAN.

██████████ further described the above individual as follows:

Race	White
Sex	Male
Complexion	Dark
Age	Middle to late 20s
Height	5'5"
Weight	140 pounds
Build	Slender
Hair	Black, medium length and wavy
Eyes	Brown
Voice	Medium tone and nervous

On June 11, 1963, ██████████ was shown glossy photographs of SIRHAN, including a Los Angeles Police Department mug photograph taken June 5, 1963, and a left profile view of SIRHAN taken sometime after the shooting of KENNEDY on June 5, 1963. After viewing these photographs, ██████████ again advised that the individual she observed at the Ambassador Hotel on June 4, 1963, very closely resembles the photographs of SIRHAN.

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[REDACTED] noted that she and her girl friend,
[REDACTED] left the hotel between 10:15 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.
arriving home at approximately 11:00 p.m. and did not further
observe the above described individual at the hotel.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 6/18/68

Mr. RICHARD EDWARD DREW, 10158 Lynrose Street, Temple City, California, telephone 447-4556, furnished the following information:

He is currently employed as a Staff Photographer for the Independent Star News, 525 East Colorado Boulevard, Pasadena, California. He was assigned as a photographer to cover the KENNEDY function at the Ambassador Hotel on June 4, 1968.

He took no photographs of the actual shooting of Senator KENNEDY or of suspect SIRHAN SIRHAN. His photographs taken at the scene were made immediately after the shooting occurred. He recalled seeing suspect SIRHAN SIRHAN struggling with several people immediately after the shooting, but he can not, of his own recollection, identify SIRHAN as the individual who did the shooting or as the individual struggling with members of the crowd around KENNEDY after the shooting.

He recalled seeing the individual later identified as suspect SIRHAN, struggling with several people, two of whom were ROOSEVELT GRIER and RAFAEL JOHNSON. He did not take photographs of the struggle inasmuch as the light was not sufficient for his photography and he was concentrating on photographs of Senator KENNEDY.

Mr. DREW made available three copies of photographs taken of Senator KENNEDY immediately after the shooting. Mr. DREW stated that the negatives of these particular shots are being retained by the paper on the advice of counsel, and copies of additional shots made at the same time will be made available in the near future.

Mr. DREW was unable to recall the exact time that the above photographs were taken. He remembered that the shooting occurred shortly after midnight on June 5, 1968, at the Ambassador Hotel. After he arrived at the hotel and went to the Embassy

On 6/17/68 at Pasadena, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

by SA WILLIE R. WHITE/sdb - 360 - Date dictated 6/17/68

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Room he scouted the area in an effort to determine the entrance and exits which Senator KENNEDY might utilize. He decided that the most logical exit and entrance would be from the kitchen area into the Embassy Room.

He recalled seeing HAL FILAN and WALLY FONG of the local office of Associated Press in the Embassy Room. He does not recall seeing them in the kitchen area where the Senator was shot.

He recalled that Senator KENNEDY came on to the podium in the Embassy Room for a speech. Mr. DREW took photographs of KENNEDY from the stage. Mr. DREW then left the stage and went behind the podium into a hallway and down to a small room. He was looking for a sandwich at the time. He recalled that this might have been a press room. He found a sandwich and then went back out into the Embassy Room. He went around the room to the television stands behind the crowd and took some additional pictures. He then went into the kitchen area and asked for water. He got a glass and filled it with ice from the ice machine. He recalls standing in the kitchen talking with Reporter BORIS YARO of the Los Angeles Times. During the time he spent in the kitchen looking for water, he recalled that he walked almost to the back of the kitchen and then returned to stand with YARO near the entrance of the kitchen. They heard that Senator KENNEDY was coming off the podium. At this time, he handed his glass of water to one of several KENNEDY girls that were standing inside the entrance to the kitchen area so that he could be ready to take photographs. Senator KENNEDY came into the kitchen area and passed Mr. YARO, and then approached DREW. Senator KENNEDY smiled and passed Mr. DREW who followed him. Mr. DREW's next impression was of a "movement of people in the far end of the kitchen." He heard a noise similar to a firecracker and then saw smoke. He looked up and "saw an arm with a gun pointed at me." He ducked. Mr. DREW recalled that after he saw the smoke he noticed Senator KENNEDY's head sink.

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He remembered hearing two shots, then a pause and then three more shots. There may have been more shots, but this was his impression at the time. Immediately thereafter, people began pushing DREW back and he saw others lowering Senator KENNEDY to the floor. The coat he was wearing was splashed with drops of blood. At this point, he realized he was a photographer and began taking photographs. He recalls taking some photographs from the top of a nearby serving table. He recalled that some other photographer took a photograph which showed Mr. DREW on the serving table taking photographs.

Mr. DREW stated that he is retaining his sport coat in a safe condition and with the blood spots still on it in the event that it is needed at some future time by the authorities.

Mr. DREW did not see the Police Officers taking suspect SIRHAN out of the area as during this period he was looking for a phone to call his newspaper. He recalled that originally he mentioned that he thought the suspect was dressed in some type of blue jump suit, however, upon further reflection he believes that he was mistaken. He apparently received this impression of a blue jump suit because he thought the suspect's clothes were all one color and possibly bluish.

Mr. DREW took no photograph in the kitchen prior to the shooting and he stated that he did not recall seeing suspect SIRHAN or any woman in a polka dot dress in the kitchen prior to the shooting. He did not recall seeing a woman in a polka dot dress in the kitchen after the shooting.

He recalled seeing Reporter RON BENNETT of United Press International in the kitchen after the shooting, but he can not say if BENNETT was present when the shooting occurred.

Subsequent to the shooting, he and BORIS YARO proceeded to the home address of suspect SIRHAN and took a number of photographs. He recalled that YARO discovered what appeared to be a .22 caliber spent slug in a trash box at the back of the house.

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It was left there for the Police. Mr. DREW recalled pointing the items out to a Police Officer who picked it up. Mr. DREW recalled that he also took a photograph of a bullet found in the garage at the house which was being placed in a bag by a Policeman.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 6/20/68

Mr. ALBERT VICTOR ELLIS, 842 South Berendo, Los Angeles, California, telephone 386-8322, was interviewed at the Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, California, and he furnished the following information:

He was born April 23, 1939 at Cortland, New York. His Social Security Number is [REDACTED]. He is employed by R. A. Watt, Incorporated, Gardena, California.

He is a roommate of JOHN SHAMEL, the Convention Manager for the Ambassador Hotel.

On June 4, 1968, he was in the Embassy Room of the hotel with SHAMEL. He was also at various other locations with SHAMEL in the hotel on June 4, 1968.

He and SHAMEL were together in the Embassy Room when Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY completed his victory speech and he observed Senator KENNEDY leaving the platform and going out of the Embassy Room through the door to the rear of the platform. When Senator KENNEDY left the platform, he and SHAMEL walked out of the Embassy Room through the front doors of the Embassy Room, towards the lobby and as they were exiting the room, Mr. UNO TIMANSON, one of the Vice Presidents of the hotel, came running out and told SHAMEL to call a doctor.

SHAMEL departed to call a doctor and he, ELLIS, returned to the Embassy Room to the platform area. As he got to the platform area, he observed a lady being carried into the Embassy Room and noticed she had a head wound.

When he was returning to the platform area in the Embassy Room, he believes he heard a female voice state "We shot him". He assumed at the time this person meant we the people were the cause of the Senator being shot and therefore, "We shot him." ELLIS advised he did not see this individual, but only heard the voice and could not recall any unusual tone to the voice.

On 6/14/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

by SA ROBERT F. PICKARD/mmc - 364 - Date dictated 6/17/68

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He left the Embassy Room shortly after hearing this individual and he went out into the lobby of the hotel where numerous people were milling around and talking about the shooting. He heard several other people in the audience state something to the effect "We shot him." and from the other conversations he was able to determine that they meant that the people were the cause of Senator KENNEDY being shot and it was in this context that they said, "We shot him."

ELLIS stated that while he was touring the hotel with SHAMEL during the evening of June 4, 1968, he noticed that there were quite a few shoddily dressed individuals in the hotel.

On June 5, 1968, he saw SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN's photograph in the newspaper, and he immediately recalled having seen SIRHAN in the Embassy Room at approximately 10:00 p.m. on June 4, 1968. He was unable to describe the clothing that SIRHAN had on at the time, but only recalls he did not fit in with other individuals in the room. He believes SIRHAN had on some sort of dungarees and a jacket. At the time he observed SIRHAN, SIRHAN was standing alone. He did not notice anyone else in SIRHAN's company.

He was shown a photograph of SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN, and he advised that SIRHAN is the individual he observed in the Embassy Room at approximately 10:00 p.m. on June 4, 1968.

ELLIS stated he does not recall having seen any woman in a polka dot dress or wearing a piece of clothing with a polka dot design at the Ambassador Hotel on June 4 or 5, 1968.

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ELLIS advised he did not hear the shooting at the hotel just after midnight on June 5, 1968, and was not aware that Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY and others had been shot until he heard it being discussed by the people in the hotel.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 6/20/68

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DAVID MARK ESQUITH was interviewed concerning his knowledge as to why ROBERT F. KENNEDY, after speaking to those gathered in the Embassy Room of the Ambassador Hotel, apparently changed his plans as to the direction of his exit from the podium, and left the stage at a point different from that where he entered.

He stated he was standing at the foot of the stairs on the right side of the stage, as one faces the stage, when ROBERT F. KENNEDY entered the Embassy Room, and as KENNEDY started up the stairs onstage, he, ESQUITH, reached out and shook hands with Senator KENNEDY, saying "Congratulations", or something to that effect. KENNEDY made some brief reply; such as "Thank You, son", and continued onto the stage.

During Senator KENNEDY's speech, ESQUITH stood at the foot of the stairs up which Senator KENNEDY had gone.

He said he had not known from which direction KENNEDY planned to enter the room until he actually entered the room. He said JIM LOWE was very deeply involved in the KENNEDY campaign organization and had apparently been in on some of the planning for the Senator's appearance. LOWE, he believed, had done some coordinating work between the KENNEDY group on the fifth floor and the people waiting in the Embassy Room.

It was ESQUITH's recollection that LOWE was in the KENNEDY party as that party mounted the stage, but he did not know at what point LOWE had joined the KENNEDY group. About a minute or two before Senator KENNEDY concluded his speech, someone, ESQUITH believed LOWE, told him Senator KENNEDY was going to exit from the left rear of the stage, as one faces the stage, and go through the kitchen area, rather than have to try to fight his way back through the huge crowd in the Embassy Room. He said there was so much confusion he is not even sure it was LOWE who told him this. The reason he was told, according to ESQUITH, was because he and other KENNEDY workers

On 6/15/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

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by SA W. JAMES WOOD/pih Date dictated 6/15/68

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had taken it upon themselves to try to clear a path for the Senator's entry and exit, and he was in no position to get to the rear of the stage to attempt to clear a path there.

ESQUITH said he was not told, and does not know for sure what the original exit plans were, but assumes they were different than those which were eventually worked out, because LOWE, or whoever talked to him about this, indicated the exit to the left and rear was a change in plans. He said he does not know who told LOWE about this change in plans, if, in fact, it was LOWE who had passed this information on to him.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 6/17/68

Mr. EDWARD P. ESSERTIER, Editor, Independent Star-News, 525 East Colorado Boulevard, Pasadena, California, furnished a copy of the original notes by Reporter LARRY PALMER. These notes by PALMER were made during his phone conversation with the newspaper Staff Photographer RICHARD EDWARD DREW, who called in to PALMER information about the shooting of ROBERT F. KENNEDY. The call was made by DREW a few minutes after the shooting from the Ambassador Hotel. The first page attached designated No. 1 are the original rough notes by PALMER. Pages two and three attached are the rewritten notes by PALMER, which were published. Pages two and three were dictated 2 AM, June 5, 1968, to Associated Press. Page four attached hereto is the actual article based on DREW's information which appeared in the Independent Star-News, June 5, 1968.

On 6/17/68 at Pasadena, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

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by SA WILLIE R. WHITE/sdb Date dictated 6/17/68

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larry/di/drew

He had just finished speaking and was being ushered through the kitchen by his aides ~~xxx~~ when five shots were fired from in the crowd. Sen. Kennedy slumped backward ~~xx~~ and was eased backward by ~~by~~ the the crowd around him.

He lay, without a crowd around him, as the gunman was grabbed by ~~Raper~~ ^{Raper} Johnson.

The man was wearing a blue jump suit, and I saw his arm come out and I saw a gun. I ducked ~~xxx~~ and got out of the way. There were two shots, a ~~xx~~ half a second pause and three more shots.

Roosevelt Grier and Johnson were there and the guards were trying grappling with the gunman trying to disarm him.

There were at least a dozen person around him.

Lying on floor, people came over please get a doctor, ~~x~~ please get a doctor. Police ~~xx~~ ambulance came. All aids screaming and pushing everyone out of the way.

Barricades went up smith ~~also~~ shot in kitchen stream of blood from back of Kennedy on floor. was flowing out like water.

blood on drew's coat. Kennedy shot first, then smith

50 in kitchen at time of shooting. taken service elevator shaking---

larry/rew/drew

kennedy 4 jun

By RICHARD DREW

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(Sen. Kennedy) (making his victory speech)

He had just finished ~~speaking~~ and was being ushered through the kitchen by his aides when I saw an arm come out of the crowd, ~~with~~ It was holding a gun.

As soon as I saw the gun--it was pointing right at me for a second--I ducked and tried to get out of the way.

Just then I heard two shots, Then there was a half ~~to~~ second pause, and then three more.

As I looked up Sen. Kennedy started to ~~fall~~ fall back and then was lowered to the floor by his aides. There were about 50 of us in the kitchen when the shots were fired, mostly Kennedy men and the press.

For a few seconds everyone stood back not getting too close to him. It was about then that I saw another man (~~lying on the ground~~) lying on the ground.

At almost that instant people began to close in round the bodies and ~~some~~ someone started screaming. "Get a doctor, please get a doctor," that was all I could hear over the yelling and crying.

Rafer Johnson and Roosevelt Grier grabbed a man in ~~an~~ a blue jump ~~suit~~ suit and they and about a half dozen guards began grappling ~~with~~ with him trying to disarm him.

Kennedy was still lying on the floor and there was blood all over him, it was flowing ~~2~~ from him like water. Finally some doctors ~~x~~ came ~~from~~ into the kitchen--along with a huge group of

2-2-2-

supporters--and began trying to treat him while they waited for the ambulance. *Someone in the crowd gave him a wig and he stuffed it in his hands.*

The crowd in the kitchen ~~was~~ kept growing and finally Kennedy's ~~aides~~ aides had to begin screaming and pushing to get people away from the senator.

Special guards set up barricades all round the area, and no one was allowed in or out. Finally a police ambulance arrived and Kennedy was lifted on to a ~~stretcher~~ *stretcher* and they started carrying him out as the other man was put on a ~~stretcher~~ *kitchen table*.

The two of them were taken out of the hotel in a service elevator and ~~is~~ put in a police ambulance. That was the last I saw of either of them.

As a momentary calm came over most of the newsmen and photographers in the room we ~~all~~ began shaking and searching for words-- it was then that I ~~found~~ found I had blood on my coat, apparently I was standing ~~so~~ so close to him that it splattered on me when he was shot.

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'I Saw an Arm—Holding a

By RICHARD DREW

Staff Writer

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Sen. Kennedy had just finished his victory speech and was being ushered through the kitchen by his aides when I saw an arm come out of the crowd. It was holding a gun.

As soon as I saw the gun — it was pointing right at me for a second — I ducked and tried to get out of the way.

Just then I heard two shots, then there was a half second pause, and three more shots.

As I looked up, Sen. Kennedy started to fall back and then was lowered to the floor by his aides. There were about 50 of us in the kitchen when the shots were fired, mostly Kennedy men and the press.

For a few seconds everyone stood back, not getting too close to him. It was about then that I saw another man lying on the ground.

At almost that instant people began to close in around the bodies and someone started screaming, "Get a doctor, please get a doctor." That was all I could hear over the yelling and crying.

Refer Johnson and Roosevelt Grier grabbed a man in a blue jump suit, and they and about a half dozen guards be-

gan grappling with him trying to disarm him.

Kennedy was still lying on the floor, and there was blood all over him. It was flowing from him like water. Finally some doctors came into the kitchen — along with a huge group of supporters — and began trying to treat him while they waited for the ambulance.

Someone in the crowd handed him a rosary and he clutched it in his hand.

The crowd in the kitchen kept growing and finally Kennedy's aides had to begin screaming and pushing to get people away from the senator.

Special guards set up barricades all around the area, and no one was allowed in or out. Finally a police ambulance arrived, and Kennedy was lifted onto a stretcher, and they started carrying him out as the other man was put on a kitchen table.

The two of them were taken out of the hotel in a service elevator and put in a police ambulance. That was the last I saw of either of them.

As a momentary calm came over most of the newsmen and photographers in the room, we began shaking and searching for words — it was then I found I had blood on my coat.

I was standing so close to him that it splattered on me when he was shot.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 6/13/681

ANNIE GANI, 237 South Palm Drive, Beverly Hills, California (telephone 274-9795), advised that she is presently employed at the Letters and Science Department at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), telephone number 478-9711, extension 3561. She also advised that she is part-time employee in the office of Congressman REESE.

GANI advised that she has worked as a part-time employee at the KENNEDY Campaign Headquarters, 5615 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, during the Democratic primary campaign. She stated that in the past she has taken photographs in Campaign Headquarters on Wilshire Boulevard. She stated that she gave these photographs to college students who had worked at Campaign Headquarters.

GANI advised that she was present at the Ambassador Hotel on election night, June 4, 1968, when Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY was assassinated. She noted, however, that she was in the press area when the shooting occurred, and stated that she was not a witness to the events that occurred prior to, during or after the assassination. GANI related that she had no further information of value to relate and pointed out that she has made an attempt to recall any events that occurred prior to the assassination which might now be of value. She noted, however, that she can recall no pertinent information or events.

GANI was located and interviewed as a result of contact with LUCY SALINGER, a press room secretary at KENNEDY Campaign Headquarters, Los Angeles, who had advised that she had seen GANI take photographs of workers at the campaign headquarters. However, GANI explained that the photographs were taken at random of students with whom she worked, doing volunteer work for the KENNEDY cause. She advised that she has since given the pictures away to various students, and noted that the only significance of the photographs is the interest of the students who are shown therein.

On 6/12/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
by SA IRVIN B. WELLS, III/mlb Date dictated 6/12/68

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 6/17/68

RAFER LEWIS JOHNSON, 5470 West Boulevard, Los Angeles, California, telephone No. 294-1270, furnished the following information to SAs JAMES CAGNASSOLA, JR., and JAMES W. WOOD of the Federal Bureau of Investigation:

JOHNSON arrived at the Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, California, 8 PM, on June 4, 1968. JOHNSON met two personal friends and escorted them to the Embassy Room in the Ambassador Hotel. At 8:30-8:45 PM, JOHNSON went to the suite of rooms occupied by Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY and his staff which were located on the fifth floor of the hotel. Upon arrival at the suite, he spoke with BILL BARRY, Senator KENNEDY's bodyguard. JOHNSON asked BARRY when the Senator was going downstairs to make a speech, but BARRY could not supply this information at that time. JOHNSON told BARRY to let him know when the Senator planned to leave. JOHNSON waited in the KENNEDY suite and spoke with Mrs. ETHEL KENNEDY and other friends.

At approximately 11 PM, Senator KENNEDY went to the fourth floor of the hotel and was interviewed on television. Immediately thereafter he returned to the fifth floor and was interviewed in a television studio which was set up on that floor. JOHNSON accompanied KENNEDY during the interview. Senator KENNEDY returned to his suite approximately at 11:20 PM and at that time JOHNSON left the group and visited with his friends in the Embassy Room.

JOHNSON explained that entry into the Embassy Room was restricted to people who had passes. He recalled that the "press" had green passes and that the KENNEDY staff and possibly campaign workers were issued red passes. There also may have been other colored passes in use. Security guards were stationed at the main entrance to the Embassy Room. He recalls that there was an entrance to this room on the south side which was being used by the major television networks. There were no guards on this door.

On 6/13/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
by SA JAMES W. WOOD and SA JAMES CAGNASSOLA, JR./JC/sdb - 375 - Date dictated 6/14/68

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After completing his visit in the Embassy Room, JOHNSON returned to the fifth floor at 11:40-11:45 PM, and asked BILL BARRY when the Senator would go downstairs. Since BARRY did not know the time of departure, JOHNSON joined the other guests in the KENNEDY suite.

At midnight or shortly afterwards the KENNEDY party, consisting of approximately 30 people began to leave the suite. The group included Senator KENNEDY, ETHEL KENNEDY, JESSE UNRUH, "TUCK" (complete name unknown), ROOSEVELT GRIER, Mr. (FNU) WILSON of CBS, "STAN" (LNU) of Look Magazine, and BILL EPPRIDGE (phonetic) of Life Magazine. The party also consisted of other newsmen, camera men and writers whose identity are unknown.

Senator KENNEDY left his suite in the company of BARRY and JOHNSON. The group walked down the hallway to the right from the Senator's room and turned in the first corridor to the right. They waited for an elevator, however, when it arrived it was occupied by other passengers. Senator KENNEDY got onto the elevator and then immediately got off since he realized that there was not sufficient space to accommodate his party. The KENNEDY party then moved to another elevator on the same floor and Senator KENNEDY also got on it and left this elevator for the same reason as stated above. Thereafter the KENNEDY party went around the corner and turned left and were proceeding in the direction of the freight elevator. JOHNSON recalls that the elevator operator who was wearing an unrecalled uniform was standing near the elevator door. He is not certain who decided to take this elevator, however, he did not think that it was strange that a freight elevator would be used since most of the people in the KENNEDY party had used this elevator previously. JOHNSON could not furnish any description of the elevator operator other than to say he was not a Negro male.

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When the party entered the elevator, JOHNSON recalls seeing Senator KENNEDY, ETHEL KENNEDY, JESSE UNRUH, BILL BARRY and ROOSEVELT GRIER. He does not know who instructed the elevator operator to take them to a specific floor. When the elevator stopped and the doors opened JOHNSON observed that they were in the kitchen or serving area of the hotel and he presumed that it was the same floor where Senator KENNEDY was to make his speech.

JOHNSON does not remember who was off the elevator first, but it may have been the men from Life and Look Magazines. BARRY was leading Senator KENNEDY. JOHNSON was following behind the Senator and ROOSEVELT GRIER with Mrs. KENNEDY was behind him. After leaving the elevator Senator KENNEDY stopped when a man dressed in a white uniform, presumably a kitchen worker, reached across the table to shake his hand. JOHNSON moved toward this individual and raised his arm to keep him away. The Senator reached across JOHNSON's arm and shook hands with this man. Senator KENNEDY then moved approximately 15 feet ahead and shook hands with a white female who was dressed in a white uniform. The Senator then moved ahead five feet and greeted another male kitchen worker. The Senator may have also shaken hands with a fourth kitchen employee. JOHNSON is unable to recognize any of the men who shook hands with Senator KENNEDY but said he could recognize the woman employee.

When Senator KENNEDY finished shaking hands with the kitchen employees, BARRY led him to the Embassy Room. The hallway or corridor which the group was walking through was very crowded with television cameras, KENNEDY workers and KENNEDY staff members. The Senator was walking ahead of the group with BARRY. JOHNSON and Mr. and Mrs. GEORGE PLIMPTON became separated from the Senator because some member of a CBS camera crew was pulling a cable in the corridor and blocked their passage for a few moments.

JOHNSON observed Senator KENNEDY enter the Embassy Room through a door way which was crowded with people. He then proceeded on to the stage. JOHNSON recalls that the stage was surrounded by a curtain and that if the stage was viewed from the center of the ballroom, Senator KENNEDY would have entered the right side of the stage. During this time BARRY and JOHNSON were standing together and he questioned BARRY as to how the Senator planned to leave the stage upon the conclusion of the speech. BARRY indicated that the exit would be made the same way as they previously entered the stage. Shortly before the end of KENNEDY's speech, BARRY moved towards the Senator. Senator KENNEDY turned from the podium and started towards the side of the stage by which he had previously entered. Senator KENNEDY paused for a moment and then turned to the opposite direction (left side of stage). JOHNSON could not see whether the Senator continued to the far left of the stage, but did notice that his direction of travel was slightly towards the rear. JOHNSON realized that the Senator was leaving the stage by a different way and attempted to reach him but because of the crowd he could not move forward. JOHNSON, in the company of Mrs. PLIMPTON, walked to the back of the stage (right side) near the corridor and joined Senator KENNEDY as he walked past. JOHNSON is unaware as to why KENNEDY left the stage in a different direction.

As Senator KENNEDY walked past JOHNSON, he noticed that BARRY and unrecalled other individuals were in front of the Senator. Between Senator KENNEDY and JOHNSON, who were approximately five feet apart, there was a camera man and a sound man, identities unknown. JOHNSON and Mrs. PLIMPTON continued to follow Senator KENNEDY through a darkened area and at a point, three or four feet from an opened double doorway with a divider in the center, JOHNSON heard a sound which reminded him of a bursting balloon. A second or two later, JOHNSON heard a second similar sound and looking in the direction where he assumed the Senator should have been, he saw smoke and fragments of paper in the air. The area in front of JOHNSON was brightly lit possibly by camera lights. After hearing the second noise, JOHNSON immediately assumed that these noises were gunshots. JOHNSON immediately moved forward pushing

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people aside. Due to the great number of people in the area forward movement was seriously impaired. As he passed through the open double doors he saw BARRY hit and push a white male who was standing on the floor in front of him (JOHNSON) but slightly to the right. JOHNSON continued to push forward and observed a wounded man lying on the floor in front of the doorway. He saw blood on this person's forehead and also thought that he saw a bullet hole in the top of his head. JOHNSON then observed Senator KENNEDY lying on the floor in the same area. The Senator was lying on his back in an almost flat position but looked as if he was struggling to get up. His left arm was on the floor, his right arm moved from a down position beside his head through an arch and down to his side. JOHNSON saw blood on the floor beneath the right side of Senator KENNEDY's head. He also saw blood on the right side of KENNEDY's head below the ear and extending down the right cheek and down the right side of his chest. Senator KENNEDY looked at JOHNSON and they stared at each other for a moment.

JOHNSON was then deciding whether to assist the Senator or proceed towards BARRY who was attempting to subdue the white male who JOHNSON assumed had been firing the gun. He approached this individual and observed that he was still holding a gun in his hand. JOHNSON does not recall if the gun was being held in the right or left hand. Other unrecalled individuals were trying to seize the weapon and at this time the assailant was pushed back against a table. JOHNSON lunged at the man and grasped the front part of the gun with his left hand. ROOSEVELT GRIER had the buttend of the gun in his hand. The assailant still had his finger in the trigger housing. GRIER twisted the gun from this individual's hands and at the same time JOHNSON tightly held this person's body. JOHNSON then turned towards Senator KENNEDY and saw that BARRY was now at his side.

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At the same time that JOHNSON was holding the assailant, ROOSEVELT GRIER was holding the man around the waist and by the left leg. GEORGE PLIMPTON was holding the man's right arm and was holding his right side. A hotel employee, who JOHNSON described as having a fair complexion with a sunburn, was holding the assailant around the neck. Another hotel employee who appeared to be an Italian or Armenian was also holding this individual. At this time a male voice said, "Let me have the gun. Let go ROSIE", (meaning ROOSEVELT GRIER). "Let go RAFTER." JOHNSON then shouted to this individual who was speaking, "shut up". JOHNSON then shouted to GRIER, "ROSIE let me have the gun." The male voice then said, "Let RAFTER have the gun." JOHNSON then repeated to GRIER, "ROSIE give me the gun", and GRIER complied with his request. JOHNSON placed the gun in his left pocket and released his grip on the assailant. JOHNSON remained next to this man and while he was standing there said to this individual "Why did you do it?" The man did not answer. JOHNSON, moving his face directly in front of the assailant and looking directly into his eyes repeated "Why did you do it?" The man did not respond. JOHNSON then clenched his fist and placed the back of his fist on the assailant's forehead. JOHNSON then repeated, "Why did you do it?" The assailant answered "I'll explain it." The assailant did not speak any other words while he was in JOHNSON's presence. Several minutes later, JOHNSON observed two uniformed Police Officers approaching and he left the assailant and moved to where Senator KENNEDY was laying. Two men with a stretcher were with the Senator and ETHEL KENNEDY said to them "Don't move him. Don't lift him". JOHNSON heard the Senator say "no don't." The Senator was then placed on the stretcher and taken to the freight elevator. JOHNSON stood guard at the elevator door and only allowed the KENNEDY family and a few other people to enter the elevator. JOHNSON wanted to remain with the Senator so he ran from the kitchen area into the lobby and took the nearest elevator to the fifth floor where he assumed Senator KENNEDY would be taken. Since he did not find the Senator on the fifth floor, he returned to the ground floor of the hotel and found the area where the ambulances were parked. He then learned that the Senator was taken to the

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hospital and he with Deputy Mayor QUINN went to Central Receiving Hospital in QUINN's automobile. At the hospital, Police Officers allowed him to enter at QUINN's direction and he saw Senator KENNEDY. While in the hospital a Police Officer asked JOHNSON for the assailant's gun and JOHNSON denied that he had the weapon. He then saw two men whom he recognized as Police Detectives. JOHNSON told these men that he had the assailant's gun and asked if Chief THOMAS REDDIN was at the hospital. One of the detectives told JOHNSON that REDDIN was not present, but that they would take possession of the gun. JOHNSON informed the detectives that he would only surrender the gun at Police Headquarters. The detectives thereafter transported JOHNSON to Good Samaritan Hospital and accompanied him to the floor where Senator KENNEDY was being treated. The same detectives then drove him to the Los Angeles Police Department Headquarters and at this time JOHNSON surrendered the gun. The gun was given to Sergeant CALKINS and Sergeant MC GANN who are assigned to the Los Angeles Police Department Detective Bureau, 150 North Los Angeles Street, Los Angeles, California.

JOHNSON said that the assailant's gun was a revolver, black in color with brown grips. The barrel of the gun was approximately four inches long. JOHNSON was unable to recall the caliber of this weapon.

JOHNSON stated that he has seen photographs of SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN in the newspaper and on television and SIRHAN is the same person who he helped to subdue following the shooting of Senator KENNEDY and others on June 5, 1968, at the Ambassador Hotel. JOHNSON is certain that he did not see SIRHAN in the hotel or elsewhere prior to the time he helped to subdue him.

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JOHNSON does not recall seeing a woman wearing a white dress with polka dots either prior to or after the shooting. He did not see anyone run from the kitchen area after the shooting occurred.

He explained that the kitchen or serving area was very crowded and that when the first shots were heard people immediately fell to the floor or attempted to hide to keep out of the line of fire.

JOHNSON said that he is certain that he heard at least four shots. The first shot was followed one or two seconds later by a second shot. The second shot was followed by a "string of shots", exact number unrecalled. No shots were fired while JOHNSON was attempting to seize the assailant's gun.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 6/15/68

DAVE KENNERLY, 876 Manhattan Beach Boulevard, Apartment A, Manhattan Beach, California, telephone 379-4227, who is employed as a staff photographer for United Press International (UPI), 1543 West Olympic Boulevard, Suite 438, Los Angeles, California, telephone 387-7221, furnished the following information with respect to his knowledge of the events of June 4 and 5, 1968 at the Ambassador Hotel, where Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY was shot.

On June 4, 1968, he was assigned to shoot photographs of Senator KENNEDY at the Ambassador Hotel, so he proceeded there at approximately 10:00 p.m. and parked in the red zone in front of the hotel, facing Wilshire Boulevard. He then entered the front door of the hotel and proceeded to look over the ballroom and all the areas where he thought the KENNEDY party might be. After looking over the ballroom he proceeded to the Fifth Floor, where the KENNEDY suite was located and where a private press party involving thirty or forty key members of the press was in progress. He had two or three beers with another photographer, ONDINE VAUGHN, from Screen Gems Productions in Los Angeles. While there he took several photographs of Senator KENNEDY in the hallway and coming out of his private room, which was located adjacent to the larger party room, where the party was taking place. He recalls seeing ETHEL KENNEDY and several of the KENNEDY children present in the party room.

Senator KENNEDY then proceeded to the Fourth Floor where National Broadcasting Company had some television cameras set up. The Senator then proceeded back to the Fifth Floor where Columbia Broadcasting System and American Broadcasting Company had similar setups. He made television statements at each of these locations. KENNERLY advised he followed Senator KENNEDY when the Senator made his television statements. KENNERLY then went to the main ballroom and obtained a vantage point near the television cameras, which were set up there to record the rally and the speech later made by the Senator.

On 6/13/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
by SA WILLIAM L. BOURQUE and SA DAVID H. COOK, DHC/mmc - 383 - Date dictated 6/14/68

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From that point, he shot many photographs of the crowd and the Senator as he was making his speech and greeting the public. Just before the speech ended, he, KENNERLY, proceeded to the downstairs ballroom where he knew another rally was going to take place. There were many people downstairs and a band. He waited approximately ten minutes and then he heard rumblings in the crowd that the Senator had been shot. He also heard a call requesting a doctor. He then went outside and observed an ambulance leaving the hotel. Since his automobile was parked in a good position to leave the Ambassador Hotel, he was able to leave the area just as it was being blocked off. He followed the ambulance to the Central Receiving Hospital, 1401 West Sixth Street, Los Angeles and observed several photographers who were already on the scene when he arrived. He was able to obtain several photographs of Senator KENNEDY as he was being removed from the ambulance. A short time thereafter, as Senator KENNEDY was removed to the Good Samaritan Hospital, he was able to take some more photographs of him.

He advised that all of his photographs were carried by messenger to his Los Angeles UPI office, and thereafter the negatives were forwarded to UPI headquarters in New York City. He advised copies of these negatives could be obtained by the FBI from the New York UPI headquarters.

KENNERLY advised that the above information is true and correct to the best of his knowledge and that it portrays his personal observations of Senator KENNEDY at the Ambassador Hotel on June 4 and 5, 1968. He stated he can furnish no further information than that already related above.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 6/12/68

JOHANNES A. KORTHOFF, Assistant Manager, Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, California, furnished the following signed statement:

"Los Angeles, Calif.
June 11, 1968

"I, Johannes A. Korthoff, make the following voluntary and free statement to John H. Borgman, who has identified himself to me as a Special Agent of the FBI.

"My name is Johannes A. Korthoff. I reside 3198 W. 7th Street, Los Angeles, Apt 404. I was born 9/20/34, Utricht, Netherlands.

"I am the assistant manager of the Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles.

"On Wednesday, June 5, 1968, I was on duty in my normal capacity at the hotel. Shortly after midnight on the morning of June 5 I was in the Embassy Room while Senator Kennedy was on the podium. Shortly before the senator left the podium I went to the lobby and then to the main kitchen. As I was walking into the kitchen I heard several reports. At the time ~~I thought~~ these reports were balloons bursting or firecrackers. I cannot recall how many reports or in what sequence. I was standing at the corner of the entrance to the kitchen from the pantry way, at the corner of the kitchen nearest the Embassy Room. Senator Kennedy was moving down the pantry way toward me at about a distance of 25 to 30 feet. At the time I heard the reports I saw the Senator lurch. At that point the Senator disappeared from my view, and a male voice, either beside or behind me shouted either "I'm shot" or "he's shot".
~~Immediately there was chaos a press of people~~

On 6/11/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

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by SA JOHN H. BORGMAN/clp Date dictated 6/11/68

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"moving back and forth. I did not see the person who had fired the shots. I immediately pushed my way through the crowd to the Bell Captain's Desk to use the telephone. However, as I reached the phone I found that Pat Murphy, our Security Guard was on the phone telling the operator to contact the police and to have an emergency ambulance sent to the hotel.

I then went back to the pantry way. There was a great wrestling of people going on and I could see people standing around or looking down on others who were apparently injured. I ran back to the Bell Captain's phone and told Ruby, the switchboard supervisor who was on duty, to call additional ambulances and police because I thought from the number of people involved and their violent actions that many more people were injured. I think my exact words were, "my God, they're slaughtering each other".

"I went back to the kitchen and I saw a man on the steam table in the pantry way and a large colored fellow lying across him. The gun, a very small gun, being held up in the air, pointed toward the ceiling. It was my impression that the gun was being held by the man lying on the steam table. I did not see the face of the man on the steam table at that time. I then left the scene and returned to my desk in the lobby, where I locked my phone. While I was putting the lock on my phone a Los Angeles police officer brought a young man whose hands were handcuffed behind him past my desk, past the public phones and the two disappeared from my view down the corridor leading to Executive Suites A & B. The man in custody appeared to be of Mexican extraction, in his early twenties, 5 foot 6 or 7 inches, medium dark complexion, dark hair, dressed in a bluish-grey dress shirt with sleeves rolled up and wearing dark trousers.

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"I was then kept busy in the lobby trying to maintain some semblance of order. After what seems like 20 to 30 minutes I saw about 6 or 7 police officers bring a man, a Caucasian who was short with dark hair in his early twenties out of the pantry way, through the lobby and down the stairs to the bottom floor. I was standing at the head of the stairs where the officers with the suspect passed me at an approximate distance of two or three feet. I was amazed at the calm demeanor of the suspect.

"The individual with police, the suspect, looks just like the photo of Sirhan Bishara Sirhan whose photo was shown to me by Mr. Borgman.

"I have read the above 6 page statement and it is true to the best of my knowledge.

"S/ J. A. Korthoff

"Witnesses:

S/ John H. Borgman, Special Agent, FBI,
Los Angeles, Calif., 6/11/68.
S/ Robert E. Sage, Special Agent, FBI,
Los Angeles, Calif., 6/11/68

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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Date 6/10/68

Mr. JAMES W. LOWE, 4620 Coliseum Street, Los Angeles, home phone number 296-7505, furnished the following signed statement:

"June 9, 1968
Los Angeles, Calif.

"I, James W. Lowe, 4620 Coliseum St. Los Angeles Calif. make the following voluntary statement to William A. Bailey who has identified himself to me as a Special Agent of the FBI. I have been told that this may be used in court. I was the chairman of the membership of the Young Professionals for Kennedy.

"Because of this position I was asked to work with the Kennedy Advance Party and the coordinators connected with the Kennedy staff. I was present in the Embassy Room at the Ambassador Hotel on the evening & morning of June 4-5 1968. After assisting in clearing a path for Senator Kennedy to enter the Embassy Room through the kitchen & pantry I then positioned myself on the steps leading to the stage in the Embassy Room while Senator Kennedy made his speech.

"According to the plans as told to me by Pierre Salinger, Senator Kennedy was to leave the stage after his speech and go directly to the Ambassador Room downstairs to address the people there.

"At sometime during the Senator's speech I was approached by an individual that I assumed to be a part of the Senators Advance Team. This individual stated that the Senator was going to the Colonial Room after his speech for a press conference and that I was to aid in clearing a path for him.

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by SA WILLIAM A. BAILEY/sle Date dictated 6/10/68

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"After Senator Kennedy completed his speech myself Rafer Johnson & several others began clearing a path for Senator Kennedy through the pantry and into the kitchen. I stopped at the double doors leading to the kitchen & at the door on my left which was open & clear. This is the door that Senator Kennedy walked through preceded by Rafer Johnson, Rosy Grier, Paul Shieb and several others. I stopped at the door in order to keep it clear & also to allow Bill Barry & Fred Dutton to catch up to Senator Kennedy.

"At this point Senator Kennedy's wife Ethel came through the door at which time I began to accompany her in order to keep a path clear for her to reach or join the Senator.

"Immediately after she came through this door I heard gun fire, at least 4 rapid shots, at which time I immediately turned to cover Ethel Kennedy, picked her up bodily & carried her back through the door to the pantry area. I stayed with her & held her till I thought it was safe to let her go. I then did so and Mrs. Kennedy went back through the door to the kitchen and I went to the Embassy Room to check on my wife's welfare as she & friends were near the stage. I then attempted to secure medical help for anyone who might have been hurt.

"S/ James W. Lowe
JWL

"Witnessed:

S/ William A. Bailey SA, FBI, Los Angeles, Calif.
6/9/68"

In addition to the above statement, Mr. LOWE said that he is employed by the John Hancock Insurance Company, 3600 West Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, that he is employed

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as an insurance agent, and that he was born on September 23, 1933. He stated that he had been told by members of the Kennedy Campaign Staff that if Senator KENNEDY had received the Democratic Presidential nomination, he would in all probability be employed by the Kennedy Campaign Headquarters as part of the campaign staff.

LOWE said that he had personally met approximately 18 of the 25 individuals that were part of the Kennedy Advance Party, but that he did not recognize the individual who gave him the order to clear a path for Senator KENNEDY to the Colonial Room for the press conference. He stated that this individual was a white male, approximately 32 years of age, 5 feet 9 inches, tall, had a medium build, light brown hair, and was wearing a business suit. He said this individual seemed to know what he was doing and where he was going and it appeared as though some of the members of the Kennedy Campaign Staff did know this individual. LOWE stated that he saw numerous individuals in the pantry and kitchen area just prior to the time that Senator KENNEDY was shot that did not have press passes nor were they part of the Kennedy Campaign Staff. Hence, they technically should not have been in that area. He stated that he did observe a hotel Security Guard in the pantry area who was checking the passes of some individuals.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 6/15/68

WILLIAM (BILL) V. MANNISS, 8041 Fordham Road, Los Angeles, California, telephone 645-1929, advised that he was on Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY's staff. MANNISS had no specific title but his job was taking care of the manifest for the airplane and taking care of luggage and office equipment. He had previously worked for Continental Airlines in Los Angeles and is presently on leave of absence from that organization.

MANNISS stated that when the KENNEDY party came to Los Angeles, he was staying at his residence, but the rest of the staff was residing at the Ambassador Hotel. On June 4, 1968, at about 9:00 p.m., MANNISS and his wife PEGGY B. MANNISS arrived at the Ambassador Hotel. They had come straight from their home to the Ambassador Hotel and had parked about three blocks south of Eighth Street, because the parking lots were filled to capacity. The MANNISS entered through the Eighth Street entrance and proceeded to the victory speech.

There were about two hundred persons in the room where the speech was to be held. MANNISS is not sure of the name of the room, because he does not know the Ambassador Hotel that well. PIERRE SALINGER announced twice that Senator KENNEDY was coming down to the room to make a speech. Senator KENNEDY however, did not come after either announcement, probably because he wanted to make sure of the voting. Senator KENNEDY finally arrived and spoke. He and his wife turned to walk off the podium and MANNISS and his wife left by a door on the other side of the room from the Senator. They left with American Airlines personnel.

MANNISS and his wife walked to his car, turned on the radio and immediately heard about the shooting. They did not re-enter the Ambassador Hotel because the radio said the entrances had been blocked off so no one could enter or leave.

On 6/14/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
by SA BILLY DALE HUBBARD and - 391 -
SA LEONARD M. HALE, LMH/mmc Date dictated 6/15/68

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MANNISS further stated that he knew nothing about a press conference and he had heard nothing of a change of plan for Senator KENNEDY. It is possible, however, that his body-guard could have changed the Senator's route downstairs, because of the position of the crowd.

MANNISS was only at the Ambassador Hotel for the victory celebration and knew nothing about any other type of plans. While he was at the celebration, he saw nothing unusual and can not remember anything that could possibly have had to do with the shooting.